

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 4, and 13 are currently pending in the present application, with Claims 1 and 13 being amended, and the remainder of the claims canceled. Reconsideration and reexamination of the claims, as amended, are respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1, 3-5, 7-9, and 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Silfvast (U.S. Patent No. 6,728,382) in view of Liljenquist (U.S. Patent No. 4,940,346). This rejection is respectfully traversed with respect to the amended claims.

As previously communicated, the present invention is generally directed to a mixing console apparatus that includes operators grouped together in a manner that is easier for a user to navigate. In particular, a console in accordance with the claimed invention includes operators that are grouped together by operation sections, where the operators are position in correspondence with the appropriate corresponding electrical components of the console. Furthermore, within the grouped operation sections, the operators are further divided into subgroups, wherein operators of each subgroup are correspondingly marked with a color marking. An illustration of this arrangement can be found in Fig. 1 of the present application, which shows two operations sections (A1 and A2), illustrating each of which the operators are divided into subgroups that are identified in part by color markings (*see also* Fig. 2). Claims 1 and 13 have been further amended to specify that the subgroups of the operator sections are arranged in corresponding sequence and in tandem with each other, with the color markings corresponding to each other as well.

As also previously communicated, Silfvast discloses grouping select controls in accordance with their respective functions. As the Examiner acknowledged, Silfvast does not contain any disclosure or teaching of dividing operators, within a grouped section, into subgroups, where the

subgroups of operators are identified by color markings. The Examiner cites Liljenquist to make up for this deficiency.

Notwithstanding whether Liljenquist makes up for the above-discussed deficiency of Silfvast, Applicant respectfully submit that the references, even combined, do not disclose the new limitations that have been added to the amended claims. That is, the references do not disclose that each subgroup of the operator sections have the same number of operators in the same arrangement, that the subgroups are arranged in tandem with each other, that the sequence of the subgroups in the respective operator sections are the same, and that the color markings have a predetermined order and are applied sequentially in the same manner for each of the subgroups of the operator sections such that that subgroups have color markings corresponding to each other.

By way of illustration, with respect to Claim 1, a plurality of the group operation sections A1 and A2 (as shown in Fig. 1) are arranged in tandem with each other (vertically), with each group section being divided into subgroups ("A1-a, A1-2, A1-3") with color markings or "orange," "light blue," and "purple," such that operators 1-1 through 1-4 belonging to subgroup A-1 is distinguished from operators 1-5 through 1-8 belong to another subgroup A1-2 by their respective color markings of orange and light blue. The subgroups A1-1 and A1-2 from section A1 correspond to subgroups A2-1 and A2-2 from section A2. all of the subgroups are arranged in tandem, and their sequence of arrangements are the same, as are their color markings. This cross-corresponding arrangement of the operators allow for intuitive and logical location of the operators in an environment that may otherwise take a long time for a user to locate a particular operator.

The references do not teach such cross correspondence arrangement that utilize corresponding sequence, arrangement, and color markings within an environment of layer and sub-

layer of operator arrangement. Rather, Liljenquist simply discloses an arrangement of keys on a computer keyboard that include keys arranged in rows and columns, with the respective columns marked by different colors and respective rows marked by different symbols. Although there is a suggestion of matrix arrangement of the keys, there is no disclosure or suggestion of using corresponding sequence, arrangement, and color markings within an environment of operator group sections and within each section subgroups of operators. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submit that Claims 1, 3, 4, and 13, as amended, are not obvious in view of Silfvast and Liljenquist.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 393032041300. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

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Respectfully submitted,

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